

**TRI-BOARD MEETING
BOARD OF TOWN SELECTMEN
BOARD OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
Minutes of November 21, 2006**

- I. **ROLL CALL.** Town Selectmen: Chair Donald Wallace, Melvin Adams and Ken Johnson. Village Trustees: Chair Richard Sutor, Samantha Baraw, Libby Hambleton, Thomas McCarney, and Jim Wilson. School Directors: Chair Debra Wick, Scott Page, and Justin Wrigley. Also present were Northfield School Superintendent David Bradford, Planning Commission Chair Steve Fitzhugh, State Senator Ann Cummings, State Senator William Doyle, State Senator Phil Scott, State Representative Anne Donahue, State Representative Maxine Grad, and Warren Hagy.

Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m.

- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

III. **DISCUSSION:**

- a. **Board of Town Selectmen.** The Selectmen deferred to the other boards.

b. **Board of Village Trustees**

1. **Healthcare Funding** – who gets healthcare and who pays for it? Discussion of Catamount Health – this will be going to committee this year. This is for those without health care insurance. Looking at cards with the medical records on them, employer sponsored insurance subsidies, looking at insurance companies using same forms, etc. Looking at ways to control health care costs. Looking at universal health care plans. There will be a redistribution of costs – some will have to pay more and get less, some will have to pay less and get more, etc. Chair Wallace stated that billing paperwork problem should definitely be tackled.

c. **Board of School Directors**

1. **Policies from legislative directive** and how it impacts timing, budgeting, etc. Board's frustration level on timing of when info would be released by leg or state for building school budget. Reconsideration and rescission statutes. Follow up on those items. There was a handout to this effect.
2. **Reconsideration – Petition – Australian Ballot.** There was a question of if you could limit those that didn't vote on the item could not sign the petition, if this would be constitutional or not.
3. **Super Majority Proposal – School Budgets.** The request was to see what can be done so that the CLA does not impact the rate as much. There are two things that are being discussed – a cap and a supermajority. Rep. Donohue clarified that at this point, those two items are being discussed in the media; however, they have not been discussed in the legislature yet. Possible limit on reappraisal may help the CLA.
4. **Miscellaneous.** Anyone who would like to see a bill introduced should do so by February of this year. Anyone could see one of the local representatives to do so. Timing is important and the sooner, the better. Leg counsel can be backlogged, as well. When a local government will be given a higher priority than an individual submitting a bill.

d. Miscellaneous:

1. **Senator Doyle** – discussion on if legislators should have four year terms? Concern is that there is no staffing for the legislators. If we're thinking of changing the terms, it would be important to have staff to support; however, this would be fiscal problems. It may be more beneficial to have longer periods of time to focus on long-term projects, versus every 1 ½ worrying about campaigning. Concern that there will be the "people that can work" versus those worried "about keeping jobs". The intention is that of a citizen's legislature. Senator Scott pointed out that a 4 year term is a lot to ask of some people. Concerns that the citizen's legislature will fade into professionals, versus citizens. Senator Cummings pointed out the balance of power issue. If the administration is in for 4 years and the legislature is only 2 years, this raises balance issues.
2. **Trustees Chair Suitor** – attempt to help those at the lower end of the spectrum for assistance for funding for electricity. Ask legislature to think when they are asked to do something that costs money, when trying to alleviate that will add to the burden to those are just above that limit that do not receive help. Please do not think of the utilities as a good source for charity. Concern of the contract with Hydro Quebec. What will happen when that contract is complete? What if we can't renew? Senator Cummings said we will probably be able to renew the contract with Hydro Quebec. They are setting up a public dialogue opportunity for people to be educated and engaged.
3. **Legislative Updates:**
 - i. **Representative Donohue:** Helpful to hear specific comments. See same struggle with issues – trade offs. People don't like to hear that.
 - ii. **Representative Grad:** Thanks for continuing this tradition of meeting with them. Have heard from the members of the community of items they'd like to hear about. Veteran's homestead exemption; police officer who was in plain clothes and carrying a gun, who dropped off his child at the school and the concerns about this.
 - iii. **Senator Cummings:** Thanks for taking the time to talk to them. It's much more helpful to sit and discuss.
 - iv. **Senator Scott:** Appreciate the informal nature of this. The challenge is not the people they hear from, but rather the people they don't hear from.
 - v. **Senator Doyle:** Commend Selectman, Trustees, and Schoolboard for continuing the tradition. Rewarding to hear this from the Boards.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Non-agenda items. None.

V. ADJOURNMENT: Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha H. Baraw

Samantha H. Baraw, Clerk